



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Office of Public Affairs
655 Parfet Street - RM. E200C
Lakewood, CO 80215

720-544-2808-OFFICE
720-544-2965-FAX
www.co.nrcs.usda.gov
petra.barnes@co.usda.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*For additional information
regarding this release contact:*
Petra Barnes
State Public Affairs Specialist

Date: January 19, 2005

Are You Eligible for Colorado's Conservation Security Program?

Lakewood, CO – If you live within the boundaries of the ten Colorado watersheds designated for the Conservation Security Program (CSP) 2005 funding, you may be eligible for this new USDA program. CSP is a voluntary program designed to reward farmers for long-term stewardship. Two hundred two watersheds were identified and invited to participate across the nation. Former USDA Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman announced the selected watersheds and said that sign-ups for the 2005 CSP would begin this winter or early spring.

CSP, part of the 2002 Farm Bill, was introduced last summer in 18 watersheds nationwide. In this first opportunity for farmers from each state to participate, about one eighth of the Nation's eligible farmers will be given the chance to apply.

"This program allows us to reward the sound conservation work many of our farmers and ranchers have been doing over past years," said Allen Green, NRCS State Conservationist, Colorado. "It represents a whole new direction in conservation and agricultural policy and programs as these financial incentives are focused toward demonstrable long-term land stewardship."

Participants will be enrolled in one of three tiers in the program, depending on the extent of the conservation treatment in place on their farm or ranch. Payments will be based in part on this existing conservation treatment as well as their willingness to undertake additional environmental enhancements.

Green, goes on to say that "while protecting soil and water quality are the prerequisites for program participation, landowners will also have options to: improve wildlife habitat, undertake on-farm energy conservation, improve air quality, participate in environmental monitoring, participate in watershed-wide stewardship programs, and improve nutrient and pest management activities."

CSP will continue to be offered each year, on a rotational basis, in as many watersheds as funding allows. For additional information regarding CSP and to learn more about the selected watersheds in Colorado, please visit our website at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov.

-end-